A DAY OF JUSTICE

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ARAB CASE IN PALESTINE

By

DR. JAMAL NASIR

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In Palestine

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PREFACE

The purpose of this pamphelt is to state briefly the developments that have taken place in Palestine since 1917, and the methods used by the Zionists in order to take the country away from its people and establish in it an exclusively Jewish National State. It is not in any sense a history of Palestine. It makes no claim to cover in detail the whole situation; that task would require several volumes. Its aim is selective; to choose those occurrences which are most important and lay stress upon those facts which are most significant. With an analysis of some of the legel points envolved.

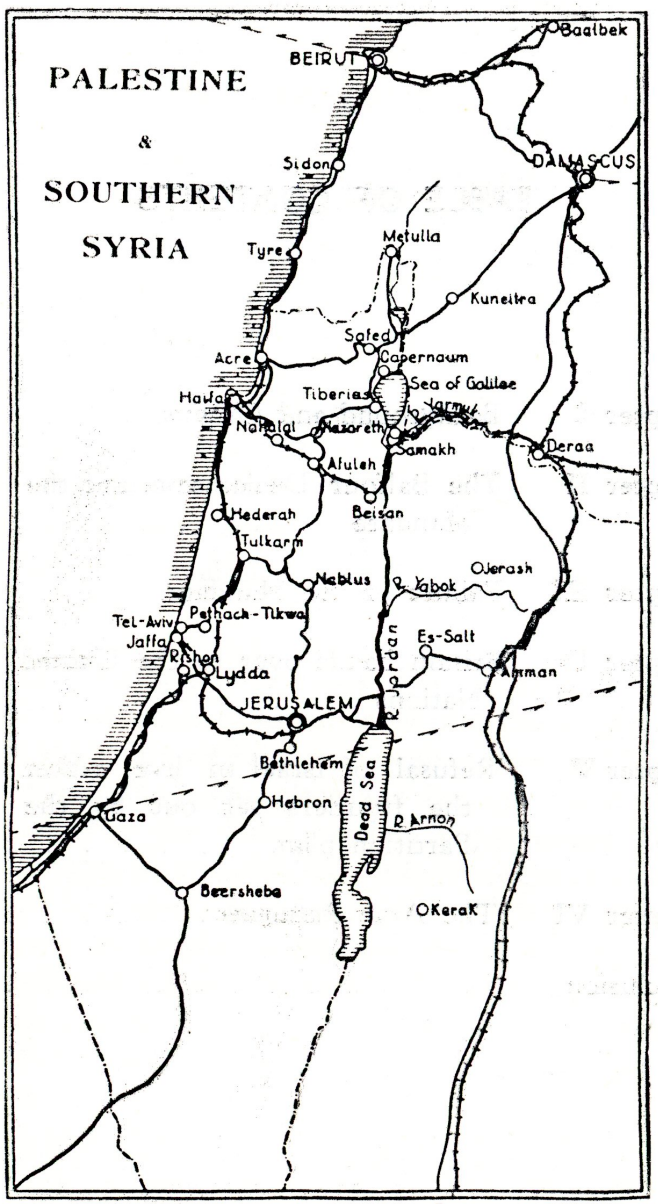
It is hoped that visitors and tourists to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan may find this pamphlet of some help in giving them a glimpse of the events and developments that took place and brought about the displacement of the Arab population of Palestine. The Arab refugees are now living a life in tents, in caves and in shattered buildings with a deeply rooted longing to go to the homeland in which they and their forefathers before them lived for thousands of years. So far, not a single refugee has been compensated. Arab property is seized by Israel to the benefit of Israel.

Jerusalem, Jordan
January, 1956.

Dr. JAMAL NASIR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Chapter I	Background and Origins	1
Chapter II	The Balfour Declaration and the Mandate	6
Chapter III	Failure of the Mandate.	13
Chapter IV	Britain hands over to the United Nations	23
Chapter V	Refusal of Israel to live within the frontiers set out by the Partition plan.	31
Chapter VI	The Arab Refugees	49
Conclusion	. . . . .	59

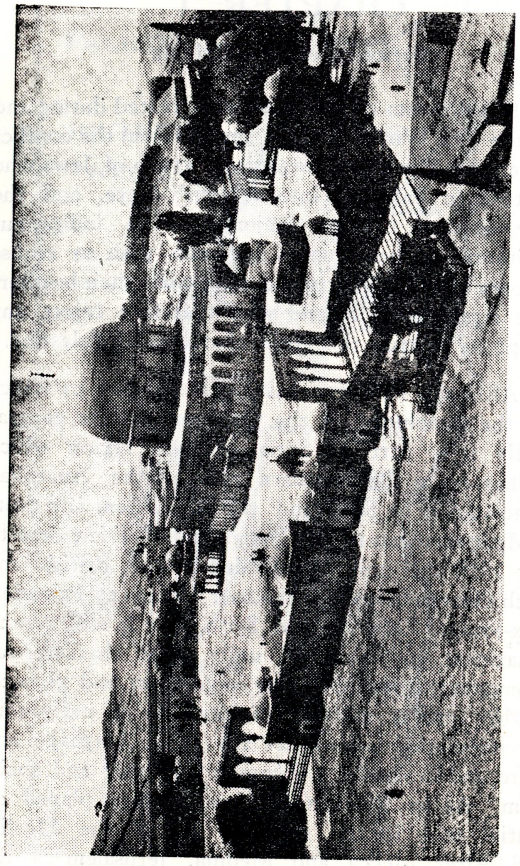


CHAPTER I

Background and Origins

The problem of Palestine was created during and after the first World War. It springs from the conflict between the Zionists, an organised group of Jews who wish to turn Palestine into a Jewish State, and the Arabs, who are the vast majority of the indigenous inhabitants of the country and who wish to realise their own ideals of liberty and unity with their brothers in the Arab countries and who therefore reject any attempt to destroy the Arab character of Palestine.

Although Palestine has had a separate existence since the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, geographically it is part of Syria, a single region which stretches from the southern edge of the Anatolian plateau down to Sinai and the Dead Sea, and from the Mediterranean to the Syrian and Arabian deserts. After 1918 this unit was divided by the British and French Governments into the four regions of Palestine, Trans-jordan, Lebanon and Syria, but it still retains its national and historical unity. It is characterised by common features of climate, vegetation and physical structure and is mainly inhabited by an indigenous Arab population who share the same language and culture and live under a common economic and social system. As to Palestine, it has always played an essential part in the religious life of the Muslim world. After Mecca and Medina, Jerusalem is the holiest Muslim city. It contains some of the most



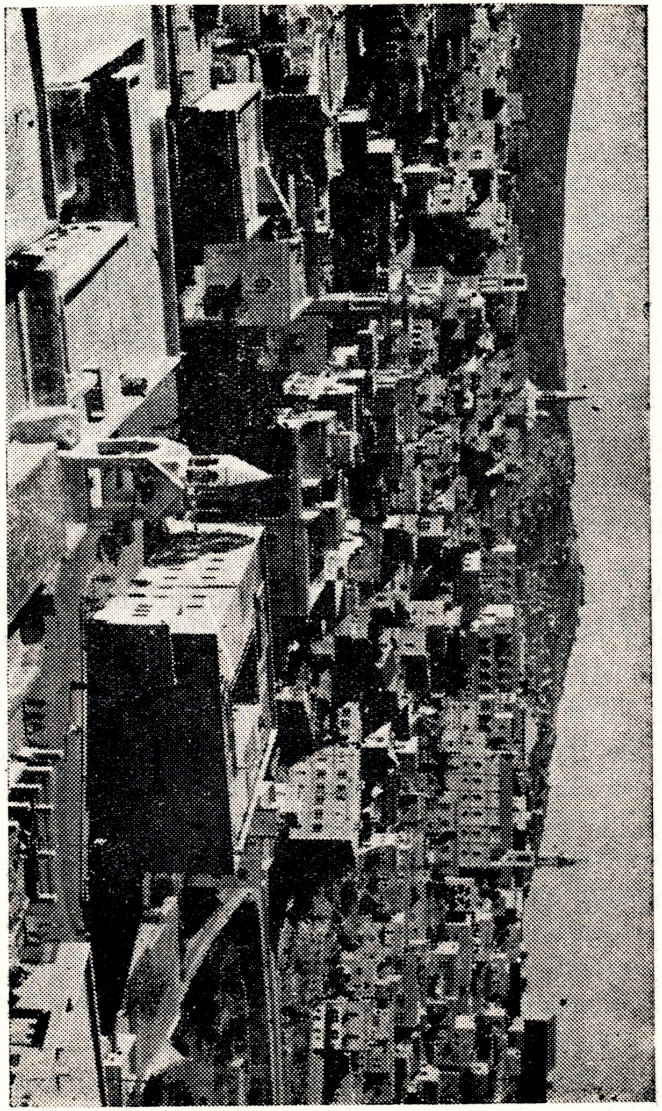
The Dome of the Rock Known by many as the Mosque of Omar.

sacred and beautiful of mosques. It is the scene of a miraculous episode in the Prophet's life, his ascent to Heaven; in the earliest days of Islam the faithful turned towards it, as now they turn toward Mecca, when they prayed.

In 1917, Palestine was and has been for 1,300 years, an Arab country. Of its population of about 650,000, more than 600,000, or about 90% were Arabs and only about 45,000 were Jews. Its Arab population were the descendants of the indigenous inhabitants, who have been in the country since the earliest recorded time and who were there when the Jews entered it in Biblical times, and went on living in it after the Jewish dispersion. The country became completely Arabised and integrated in the Arab world in the 7th century A. D. The Jewish political connection with Palestine had come to an end 2,000 years before in the 1st century A.D. At no time during those 2,000 years did the Jews form more than a small minority of the population. Of the 45,000 Jews who lived in Palestine in 1917, many were long established citizens who had become Arabised themselves and lived at peace with the Muslim and Christian Arabs. The rest were European Jews who had come to Palestine during the previous 30 or 40 years, and who cared little for political programmes, but for whom the essential was to return to Palestine for religious purposes, based on the prophecies relative to the return from Babylonian exile and the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. In this connection, one need

only note that these prophecies were completely fulfilled. Professor Alfred Guillaume points out in his article "Zionists and the Bible : "that" Within the canonical literature of the Old Testament there is no prophecy of a second return from the Babylonian exile."

The political challenge to the Palestine Arabs did not therefore come from the local Jewish community in Palestine. It came from the Zionist movement which had started in the latter half of the 19th century in Eastern Europe. This movement arose from the combination of different factors. There were the European Jews who (as has already been mentioned) cared little at the beginning for political programmes but for whom the essential was to return to Palestine. There were others who believed that if the Jews were to fulfil their mission in the world they must have a spiritual centre, and this centre must be in Palestine where the Jewish heritage could be preserved and expanded. There was, however, another group which was not satisfied with a cultural centre but which entertained political ambitions and which aimed at the establishment of a state. This political element gradually overwhelmed the others.



The town of Bethlehem where Jesus Christ was born.

CHAPTER II

The Balfour' Declaration and the Mandate

It was in 1914 that the Zionist leaders in England and particularly Dr. Weizmann and Lord Rothschild began to work with a view to securing the British recognition of, and support for, the creation under British protection of a Jewish state in Palestine. This the British Government refused to do. Meanwhile, the activities of the Zionist leaders continued in Washington, Paris and Rome. In America, where ignorance of the Arabs and their existence was even greater than in England, they had succeeded in winning a large measure of support for their scheme. And so, due to their perseverance and propaganda, and the specious presentation of their case, whereas the Arabs had no voice to speak for them, the Zionists carried the day and on the 2nd Nov., 1917, Lord Balfour, as Foreign Secretary, addressed to Lord Rothschild a letter defining what was to be the policy of the British Government with regard to Zionism in Palestine, and which was to become known as the Balfour Declaration. This was its text:

"The Foreign Office,
2nd November, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of His Majesty's Government the following declaration of

sympathy with Jewish zionist aspirations, which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet.

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

I shall be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR"

A careful reading of the Declaration and of subsequent statements will show that the British Government definitely did not promise the Jews a Jewish state. It did not even provide for the conversion of Palestine into the Jewish national home. This was reaffirmed in the White Paper of 1922, which defined the Jewish national home as a centre in which the Jews of the world could take an interest and a pride, and categorically denied that what was meant was that Palestine as a whole should be turned into a Jewish home or should lose its Arab character. Further, the British Government did not undertake to establish such a home, but only to use its best endeavours to facilitat that purpose. Moreover, and most important of all, the establishment of a Jewish national home was in no way to prejudice the rights of the existing

population. The Declaration itself spoke only of their civil and religious right; but shortly afterwards a message was sent to King Hussein ("The Hogarth Message" of January 1918) to the effect that the realisation of the zionist idea would only be facilitated in so far as was compatible with the *freedom of the existing population, both economic and political.*

Thus promises contained in the Balfour Declaration were limited and conditional, but even so they were entirely invalid. Great Britain and her Allies had no right to give away Palestine over the heads of its inhabitants, especially as at the time of the Balfour Declaration, Palestine was not yet in their hands. Sometimes the right of conquest is invoked, but most people would not regard this right as having any validity when it conflicts with the elementary principles of justice and equity. Moreover, if Great Britain had a right to dispose of Palestine, she had already promised it to the Arabs, long before the Balfour Declaration was issued, in the Hussein - McMahon Letters of 1915 - 1916. The Arabs have always believed that Palestine was included in the sphere of independence promised by Sir Henry McMahon on behalf of the British Government. Such is the clear meaning of the text of the correspondence. The Maugham Committee, set up by the Palestine Conference of 1939 to go into the question of these promises admitted that there was more force in the Arab contentions than the British Government had previously recognised.

As to the Mandate, Article (22) of the Govenant of the League of Nations sets out the principle of the Mandate in the following manner:

> " Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognised subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory, until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory . . . . "

The Mandate, as can be seen, did not take these principles fully into account, nor pervious pledges made to the Arabs by the Allies. Thus the Arabs have always regarded the Mandate as invalid. In the first place, the Mandate says nothing about the provisional independence of Palestine. Secondly, the Mandate was granted to Great Britain and the Mandatory was specifically enjoined to encourage Jewish settlement; this ran counter to the wishes of the inhabitants as expressed to the King-Crane Commission whish was sent out to Palestine and Syria by President Wilson in 1919 and reported that the majority of the inhabitants wanted no tutelage, but would have preferred American to any other (because at that time they beleived that America was not committed to Zionism) and that they were strongly opposed to the execution of a pro-Zionist policy. The truth of the matter is that the Mandate was drafted with two different intentions in mind. First it was designed to conform as far as possible with Article (22)

of the Covenant and with the Mandates for Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, of which the declared purpose was to train the inhabitants in self-government until such time as they could stand alone. Article (2) obliged the Mandatory to take steps to secure the development of self-governing institutions and Article (3) recommended the encouragement of local autonomy so far as conditions permitted. Secondly, the Mandate was designed to carry out the promise contained in the Balfour Declaration. Article (6) required the administration to facilitate Jewish immigration and settlement on the land in co-operation with the Jewish agency; but with the promise that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine. . ." From this we see that the Mandatory power was laid under two kinds of obligations which were incompatible, as several commissions, including the Royal Commission of 1937, found.

The fundamental reason for the opposition to Zionist immigration by the Muslim and Christian Arabs who constituted 90% of the population was based upon what is right and just. The Arabs rightly claimed the right of a population to decide the fate of their country which they had occupied throughout history. To them this right could not be overruled either by the fact that Palestine had been governed by the Ottoman Sultan for 400 years (the Arabs, during this period, were not an oppressed people, but were full citizens of the Ottoman Empire), or by

the fact that Great Britain had conquered it during the 1914-1918 World War. Nor could it be placed on the same level as the "historical right" claimed by the Jews. The Jewish connection with Palestine (as had already been said) had come to an end 2,000 years ago. Any claim deriving from it had obviously been cancelled by 13 centuries of continuous and uninterrupted possession of the country by the Arabs. Surely, such long and uninterrupted possession of Palestine by the Arabs is the only basis of any people's right to their country. It is this principle and this alone which gives the British their right to Britain, the Americans their right to America, or the French their right to France.

The Arab's opposition to the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate is based on the infringement of the natural right of the country to decide its political destiny and also because the establishment of a Jewish National Home would make it impossible for the inhabitants to fulfil their aspirations. They would live on sufferance, shut out of the political community and could never become full members of a Jewish state which by its very nature must be exclusive; and as events have shown, they would be driven out to make room for further Jewish immigrants. Apart from the question of "natural right" the attempt to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine was regarded by the Arabs as a breach of various promises made to them by Great Britain and the United States of America during and after the 1914 - 1918 World

War. The Arabs had fought on the Allied side during the war in the hope of independence. When the war ended, the more advanced parts of Arab Asia were divided into a number of artificial units and placed under mandatory government. The adoption of a Zionist policy in Palestine was thus only a part of an unsatisfactory general policy adopted by the Allied Powers and impossed upon the Arabs against their will. Moreover, Palestine could never solve the "Jewish question" because the country is not in any way big enough to make room for all the Jews in the world.

CHAPTER III

The Failure of the Mandate

The first violent expression of Arab feeling occurred in 1920. In the next fifteen years there were a number of revolts. Finally, a large—scale revolt broke out in 1936—1939. This took the form of guerilla warfare and a general strike in 1936.

It was during this revolt that the sympathy of the whole Arab world for the Arabs of Palestine first expressed itself fully. The most important Arab conferences held during that period (Bloudan July, 1937, and Cairo, November, 1938) were convened with the purpose of taking effective measures to deal with the Zionist danger. The important outcome of these developmemts is that the world recognised that what happened in Palestine was of concern to all Arab countries. Thus when the British Government summoned a conference of all the interested parties to discuss the problem in London at rhe beginning of 1939, the Arab Governments of Egypt, Saudi—Arabia, Yaman, Iraq and Trans-jordan were invited to take part, together with representatives of the Palestinian Arabs. Syria and Lebanon were not permitted by the French Mandatory Government to send representatives.

The outbreak of the Arab revolt in 1936 showed beyond any doubt that both British and Zionist policy which was based upon the hope that sooner or later

the Arabs would give up their oppostion to the establishment of a Jewish home was without any foundation. This was made clear by the report of the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into the causes of the disturbances. The report which was published in 1937 made clear, among other things, that Arab opposition was unshakeable because based not simply upon the calculation of advantages or suspicion and mis-understanding, but upon a conviction of right and the desire for independence. It recognised also that the attempt to treat immigration as a purely economic question to be decided simply by reference to absorptive capacity was unrealistic; immigration was essentially a political question, indeed the most important political question upon which all others depended. The report, though having stated some of the fundamental principles of the problem, failed to draw the logical conclusion from them. It ended by recommending the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states (a scheme that had no connection with the analysis contained in the report). The implications of the Peel report were not drawn until the issue of the White Paper in 1939, after the failure of the London Conference of that year. The importance of the passage in which the White Paper summarized the implications of the Royal Commission's report deserves to be quoted in full :

"In the view of the Royal Commission, the association of the policy of the Balfour Declaration with the mandatory system implied the belief that Arab hostility to the former would sooner or later be overcome. It has been the hope of British Governments ever since the Balfour Declaration was issued that in time the Arab population, recognising the advantages to be derived from Jewish settlement and development in Palestine, would become reconciled to the further growth of the Jewish national home. This hope has not been fulfilled. The alternatives before His Majesty's Government are either (i) to seek to expand the Jewish national home indefinitely by immigration, against the strongly expressed will of the Arab people of the country or (ii) to permit further expansion of the Jewish national home by immigration only if the Arabs are prepared to acquiesce in it. The former policy means rule by force. Apart from other considerations, such a policy seems to His Majesty's Government to be contrary to the whole spirit of Article (22) of the Covenant of the League of Nations, as well as to their specific obligations to the Arabs in the Palestinian mandate. Moreover, the relations between the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine must be based sooner or later on mutual tolerance and goodwill; the peace, security and progress of the Jewish national home itself requires this. Therefore His Majesty's Government, after earnest consideration, and taking into account the extent to which the growth of the Jewish national home has been facilitated over the last twenty years, have decided that the time has come to adopt in principle the second of the alternatives referred to above."

The significance of the White Paper of 1939 lies in that the British Government came finally to the conclusion that neither their undertakings to the Jews nor the interests of Britain warranted that they should continue to develop the Jewish national home. They therefore issued this final statement of policy the most important points of which were the following:

1. It stated quite clearly and finally that it was not the intention of the British Government to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, nor that this state was ever intended by the Balfour Declaration, a fact which Zionist leaders fully recognized at the time when the Balfour Declaration was issued

2. It stated that His Majesty's Government had carried out the obligation towards the Jewish community regarding the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine.

3. It stated that His Majesty's Government were charged as the Mandatory authority "to secure the development of self-governing institutions" in Palestine. Apart from this specific obligation, they would regard it as contrary to the whole spirit of the Mandatory system that the population of Palestine should remain forever under Mandatory tutelage. It is proper that the people of the country should as early as possible enjoy the rights of self-government which are exercised by neighbouring countries. His Majesty's Government desire to see established ultimately an independent Palestine State. It should be a state in which the two peoples in Palestine, Arabs and Jews, share authority in government in such a way that the essential interests of each are secured.

4. It stated that after 75,000 Jews had come into Palestine within five years, further Jewish immigration should depend on Arab consent.

5. It stated that limits to the transfer of land to Jewish hands in certain areas must be set if Arab cultivators were "to maintain their existing standard of life and a considerable landless Arab population is not soon to be created."

As soon as this statement of British policy was issued, the Zionists decided that they had no further use for England. What they wanted was the establishment

of a full and sovereign Jewish state; consequently it became their aim first to get rid of Britain and secondly, to seize Palestine by force. The war gave the Zionists various opportunities for raising and arming the forces they required.

At the outbreak of the war (a few months after the issue of the White Paper) the Arab revolt came to an end and all political activity was suspended. This, however, did not indicate a change of attitude as has been shown by the revival of political activity by the establishment of the Arab League. The founders of the League were aware of the importance of the Palestinian problem for the whole Arab world. That is why Palestine alone of the Arab countries deprived of self-government was given representation on the Council of the League. The Alexandria protocol of October, 1944, confirmed the interest and duties of all Arab states; and the members of the League undertook to help the Palestine Arabs to realise their demands.

The Zionists reacted to the war in a different manner. From 1939 the whole effort of the Jewish Agency and of all Zionist organisations was devoted mainly to the organisation of an armed force capable of seizing Palestine by force. This was to be accomplished by the entry of Jewish youth into the Allied forces, with the sole purpose of receiving military training, later to be used against any party which stood in their way. They obtained large quantities of arms by theft, robbery or secret purchase from the

stores of the British Army. At the same time a systematic campaign was waged by the Jewish Agency for the destruction of the White Paper. This campaign against the White Paper is in fact only one stage in the campaign for a Jewish State. The organisation of illegal immigration on a large scale was excused by the Zionists by the pretence of giving shelter to Hitler's victims, but a large number of immigrants were encouraged to come to Palestine from countries where they suffered no persecution. These immigrants were not the old or sick, but they were almost entirely young men and women trained in terrorist methods in order to swell the ranks of the military and terrorist organisations built up by the Zionists to conquer the country by force and drive out its Arab population.

As the Jews in Palestine adopted a more aggressive attitude, the official programme of the Zionist movement became more extreme. The Biltmore Programme adopted in 1942 calls for unlimited immigration and the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth. Meanwhile, the Jewish agency has refused to co-operate with the Government to suppress terrorism but offered to suppress it alone if the British Government will submit to its political demands, and therefore recognised its own responsibility for and ability to deal with terrorism. A White Paper on terrorism, published in June, 1946, by the British Government, gave full evidence of agreement between the leaders of the Agency and the terrorist organisations. The activities of the terrorists, however, should not be allowed to conceal the fact

that the real danger to law and order in Palestine comes from the Hagana, a military organisation of 80,000 men built up and equipped by the Jewish Agency for the purpose of the ultimate seizure of power.

Perhaps the most significant factor during the post-war period has been the claim of the United States Government to have a direct interest in the problem of Palestine. The first sign of this was the appointment of the Anglo-American Committee at the end of 1946. This committee recommended that concessions should be made in regard to immigration. The Committee also recommended that the Mandate should continue until the hostiltiy of Jews and Arabs disappeared. In reality this hostility could never disappear so long as the Mandate continued. It becomes apparent when reading the report that one of its fundamental errors was that it stated the whole problem in terms of hostility between Jews and Arabs, while in reality one of the important reasons for the hostility was that the Zionists thought that they could rely upon Great Britain and America to protect them from the results of their refusal to seek an understanding based on Arab friendship.

The Report of the Anglo-American Committee was rejected by all Arab Governments and organisations. The Jewish reception was mixed. Some wished to reject the report completely because it did not promise them a Jewish state immediately; others regarded the report as a triumph for them because if adopted it would put an end to the White Paper and secure continued

immigration. They endeavoured therefore to lay stress on the Committee's proposal for the grant of 100,000 immigrants' certificates. They were helped on this by the United States Government which published to the world its desire to see the 100,000 immigrants brought into Palestine without any delay. The British Government, however, realised more clearly than the United States Government the dangers of trying to force further immigration upon the Arabs and the no less great danger of making concessions to the Zionists before an attempt had been made to put an end to terrorism. In June, 1946, the British Government seemed to appreciate that the Jewish Agency and the Hagana could not be absolved from responsibility for terrorist acts. Some of the leaders of the Agency were interned for reasons which were explained in a White Paper on Jewish terrorism. At the same time, stronger measures were taken against the growing movement of illegal immigration which was also largely organised by the Jewish Agency. However, this policy did not remain for long; the Agency leaders were released and the Palestine Government fell back upon its false distinction between the "moderate" Zionists of the Jewish Agency and the "extremists". Meanwhile Anglo-American negotiations on the report resulted in the formation by a committee of "experts" of a plan of federation, with a division of powers between Jewish and Arab provincial Governments and a central Government whose function would be exercised by the High Commissioner.

The main Arab objections to this plan may be summarised as follows:-

First, the establishment of a Jewish autonomous region in a small part of Palestine would not satisfy even the most moderate of the Zionists. Secondly, if the plan were carried out, the doors of Palestine would be thrown open to unlimited immigration. Thirdly, the plan had no finality. It left the central government and all other ultimate authority in the hands of the Mandatory or Trustee Government.

As the British Government published this plan, it announced its intention of calling a conference of Arabs and Jews. The Jewish Agency and other Jewish organisations rejected the invitations which were accepted by the Arab Governments. The Conference met in London in September and after adjournment met again in February, 1947, this time with representatives of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee. After defining their attitude towards the plan of federation, the delegates of the Arab states put forward their own proposals for the solution of the problem. These proposals, which were not accepted by the British Government, offer to the Zionists the greatest concessions that any Arab government could make or Arab public opinion would accept. Thus the Jews are to be adequately represented in the provisional government and are to enjoy full rights of citizenship, provided they have acquired that citizenship by due legal procedure. The Hebrew language could be employed as a second official language in the districts where the Jews

formed an absolute majority. The guarantees concerning the rights of Jewish citizens should not be subject to amendment without the consent of the Jewish citizens of Palestine, as expressed by a majority of the Jewish members of the legislative assembly. It was also made clear that unless and until legislation provided otherwise, Jewish immigration into Palestine should be prohibited and the existing land-transfer restrictions should remain unchanged. The constitution should provide that any change in these two matters could only be effected by law, requiring the consent of the Arabs in Palestine as expressed by a majority of the Arab members of the legislative assembly. It was laid down that every effort should be made to complete with the least possible delay the process of setting up the Government of Palestine, notwithstanding the non-co-operation of any section of the Palestinian citizens.

As the London Conference did not reach any result (through no fault of the Arab representatives) the British Government decided to refer the problem of Palestine to the United Nations.

When Britain came to Palestine 30 years before laying down the Mandate and evacuating Palestine, the country was an Arab country except for a small Jewish minority. Before she came there had been no problem and no conflict. She now left a Palestine in which some 700,000 Jews (about a third of the population) had been enabled to invade the country (mainly due to American political and economical support) in order to take it away from its people by force.

CHAPTER IV

Britain hands over to the United Notions

The outcome of the special session, called in May, 1947, at the request of the British Government, was not encouraging to the hopes of the Arabs that the United Nations would reach a just and fair solution. It became increasingly clear, in the course of the discussions, that certain Powers, either under Zionist influence, or for what they considered to be their own interests, had made up their minds on certain important issues before the General Assembly has had a chance to go to the root of the matter. Thus under the influence of different motives which had little connection with the merits of the case, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution on the 29th November, 1947, recommending the partition of Palestine and the establishment in it of an Arab and Jewish state. The Jerusalem area was to be neutralized, demilitarized and internationalized and to be administered by a Governor with authority from the United Nations. The partition scheme would never have gone through the United Nations General Assembly had it not been for the intensive lobbying and pressure by the United States representatives on the delegates of many of the small states that depend on American assistance. Russia, too, decided for reasons best known to herself (reasons which had no relevance to criteria of justice) to support the Zionist side. Again, many of the small countries of Europe had Jewish problems of

their own and thought that they could help to solve them by supporting the establishment of a Jewish State at the expense of the Arabs.

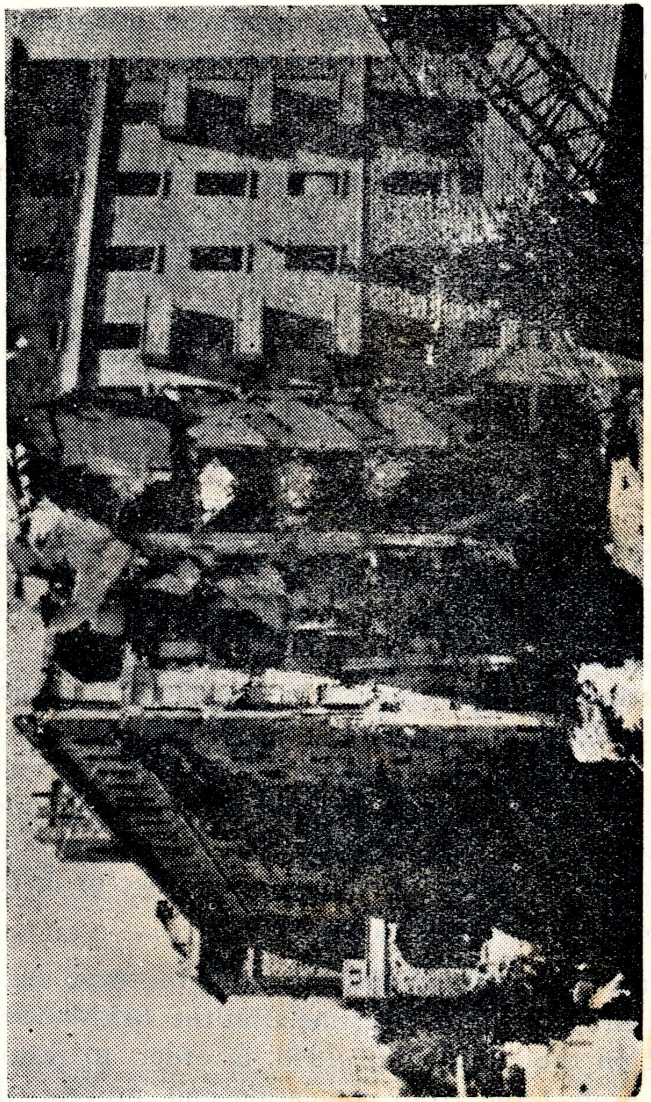
The General Assembly, in passing this resolution, exceeded its powers and violated the principles of its Charter, for what it recommended was that the vast majority of the population in thir own country should be denied the right to self-determination. Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan — the Foreign Minister of Pakistan — declared in a post-vote statment "In the words of the greatest American. 'We have striven to do the right as God gives us to see the right.' We did succeed in persuading a sufficient number of our fellow representatives to see the right as we saw it, but they were not permitted to stand by the right as they saw it . . . . . We entertain no sense of grievance against those of our friends and fellow representatives who have been compelled under heavy pressure to change sides and to cast their votes in support of a proposal the justice and fairness of which do not commend themselves to them. Our feeling for them is one of sympathy that they should have been placed in a position of such embarrassment between their judgment and conscience on the one side, and the pressure to which they and their governments were being subjected on the other."

The Arabs had demanded that the question should be reffered to the International Court of Justice for a decision on whether the United Nations had the

right to decide the issue of the ownership of Palestine. This request was rejected by a majority of only one vote in the ad hoc Committee of the Assembly (20 voting for it and 21 against it). All the Asiatic states, with their millions, were opposed to the partition resolution.

As to the Zionists, they were encouraged by the partition resolution to establish their Jewish State by force as soon as the British withdrew, regardless of whether the Assembly's scheme could be carried out in its entirety or not. This they proceeded to do, for on the 14th May, 1948, the Mandate ended and the State of Israel was proclaimed. President Truman, against the advice of his counsellors, at once gave de facto recognition to the new state, while Russia followed with its recognition de facto and de jure. At the same time, the Zionists launched against the Arab inhabitants of Palestine a campaign of brutal violence and terrorism, characterised by appalling atrocities, such as the massacre of Deir Yassin, committed in purely Arab areas, which even the United Nations had not allocated to the Jewish State. Hundreds of thousands of civilian Arabs were evicted from their homes by the orders of the Jewish military authorities or driven to leave them by fear of massacre.

It was in these circumstances that the Arab states sent their troops into Palestine after the British withdrawal on the 15th May, 1948, in order to restore order, protect the Arab population and prevent the forcible establishment of a Jewish state.



The King David Hotel in Jerusalem was blown up by Jewish terrorists towards the end of the Mandate.

The action of the Arab states (a purely defensive action taken to protect the rights and lives of Arabs in their own country) was represented as an act of aggression and the machinery of the United Nations was put in motion to defeat the Arabs. A truce was imposed under the threat of sanctions being applied against the Arab states if they did not accept it. They, therefore, accepted the truce, an essential condition of which was that while it lasted no side should be allowed to gain any military or political advantage, or in any way to increase its power to wage war. In fulfilment of this condition Britain, who was under treaty obligation to the Arab states to supply them with arms, immediatly discontinued all such supplies. But the Jews, from the first day of the truce until now, have been outrageously violating this condition under the very nose of the United Nations, without being made to suffer any penalty for their defiance, which was carried to the point of murdering the U.N. mediator. Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden was appointed by the United Nations Security Council on the 20th May, 1948, as United Nations mediator for Palestine. On the 11th June, he was able to arrange a four weeks first truce in the Palestine war (11th June to 9th July, 1948). Conditions of the truce included the barring from entering Palestine and the Arab states of all fighting personnel and the prohibition of movements of troops and war materials from country to country within the fighting area close to the borders of Palestine. Count Bernadotte made his

Headquarters in Rhodes and began his work on a plan for a peaceful solution of the Palestine problem. On the 29th June, he submitted his proposals to the Arabs and Israel. On the 17th September, Count Bernadotte was assassinated in Zionist-occupied Jerusalem by Jewish terrorists and was replaced by his American assistant, Dr. Ralph Bunche, who arranged a truce which was signed by the Arabs and Israel in 1949 (with Egypt in February, the Lebenon in March, Jordan in April and Syria in July—Iraq empowering Jordan to act on her behalf). General Aage Lundstrom, Chief of Staff, United Nations Truce Supervision, and personal representative of the Mediator, and who was present at the murder of Count Bernadotte, declared in a statement:

> "On reflection after the incident, I am convinced that this was a deliberate and carefully planned assassination. The spot where the cars were halted was carefully chosen and the people who approached the cars quite obviously not only knew which car Count Bernadotte was in but also the exact position in the car which he occupied."

The assassination of Count Bernadotte was an outrage committed against a man who had devoted his life to the cause of humanity and open defiance of the authority of the United Nations. Although the United Nations Security Council, in a resolution of the 18th September, 1948, expressed horror at the cowardly act of the Zionist assassin, yet the United Nations admitted

Israel on the 11th May, 1949, as the 59th member of the United Nations. The Arabs cannot understand how this admission can be reconciled with the United Nations charter provision which stipulates that membership in the United Nations is open to all peace-loving states which accept the obligations of the charter and are able and willing to carry out these obligations, when Israel has flouted the provisions of the Charter.

With her powerful international secret organisations in every country and particularly with the help of the countries of Eastern Europe (notably Czechoslovakia) Israel has been able to acquire a tremendous accretion of military strength by the continued importation of arms and ammunition. Thus having succeeded in altering the military situation to her advantage under the cloak of the truce, Israel launched large-scale offensives both in Southern and Northern Palestine with the object of seizing by force areas exceeding what the United Nations had allotted them in the partition plan of November, 1947. Meanwhile, the United Nations General Assembly continues to repeat its opinion which suggests an amazing lack of realism that the responsibility for negotiations rests with the parties chiefly concerned (i.e., the Arab States and Israel). The task of mediation has been entrusted to the Palestine Conciliation Commission which was set up on the 11th December, 1948, of supervision of the Armistice agreements to the Truce Supervision orgnisation and the Mixed Armistice Commission, of care of

the refugees to UNRWA.,and of economic rehabilitation of the Arab States to the United Nations Technical Assistance Board. Not only have the General Assmbly, the Security Council, the Trusteeship Council and the Economic and Social Council, as well as five of the United Nations specialised agencies, been concerned with it, but it has appointed no fewer than ten different committees or subsidiary organs, to deal with different aspects of the Palestine problem. Someone has pointed out that the United Nations has appointed more committees on the Palestine question than on any other subject.

CHAPTER V

Refusal of Israel to live within the Frontiers set out by the Partition Plan

The armistice agreements left Israel in control of a much larger territory than was allotted to her by the United Nations decisions. There are wide territories, for example: Western Galilee in the north, parts of the Negeb in the south, the hills to the west and south of Jerusalem, part of the coastal plain to the west of Jerusalem, wich are 100% Arab owned and to which Israel has no other claim except that of alleged military conquest and occupation. Upon this area there exist tens of Arab cities and villages where thousands and thousands of refugees could be settled in their homes and lands from which they were ejected by force and no kind of compensation was given to them. Even the pro-Jewish United Nations plan could not satisfy Israel, who under various pretexts of pretended self-defence and retaliation waged a war of aggression and was able by different means to occupy 77.4% of the land of Palestine. It is important to note, in this connection, that at the termination of the British Mandate in Palestine on the 15th May, 1948, Jewish land holdings were no more than 1,491,669 dunums[1]

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(1) One dunum = 1,000 square metres
4.05 dunums = one acre

out of a total of 26,323,023 dunums (excluding 605 sq. kms. of water surface area), that is, no more than 5.67% of the total area of Palestine. The following statistics of the land area of Palestine according to ownership (Arab and Jewish) during the period of the British Mandate over Palestine, according to the partition plan of 1947 and as a result of the armistice agreements signed between the Arab states and Israel, may help to give a clear picture of this aspect of the problem. These official and most reliable statistics were supplied by the Ministry of Construction & Development in Jordan.

AREA OF PALESTINE

(1) Palestine during the Mandate

Land area according to ownership

	Area in dunums	Percentage
Arab holdings . . .	12,574,774	44.79%
Jewish holdings . . .	1,491,699	5.67%
Others	142,050	0.54%
State Domain . . .	12,114,500	49.00%
	26,323,023	100.00%

(2) Palestine according to partition plan of 1947

Land area according to ownership

	ARAB STATE		JEWISH STATE		JERUSALEM I. Z.	
	Area	percentage	Area	Percentage	Area	Percentage
Arabs	8,848,290	77.69%	3,577,825	24.24%	148,659	84.70%
Jews	95,543	0.84%	1,383,858	9.38%	12,298	7.01%
Others	83,454	0.73%	50,090	0.34%	8,506	4.85%
Govt.	2,362,583	20.74%	9,745,876	66.04%	6,041	3.44%
Total	11,389,870	100.00%	147,57,649	100.00%	175,504	100.00%

(3) Palestine as a result of the Armistice Agreements

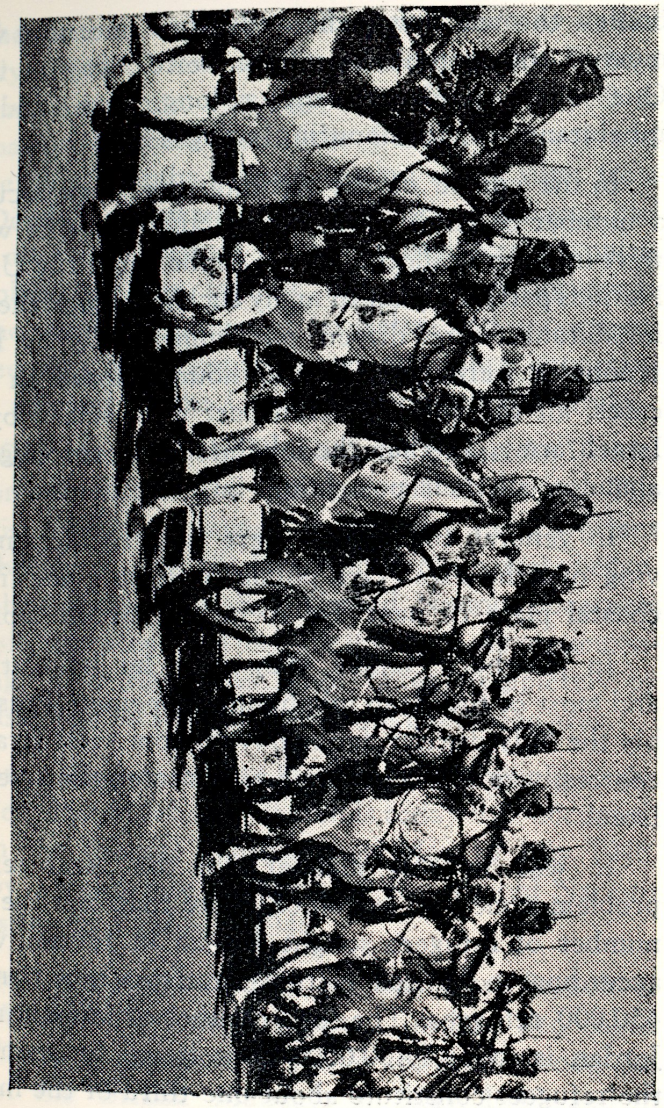
Land Area

	Area in dunums	Percentage
Arab part of Palestine which now forms West Bank of Jordan	5,755,000	21.30%
Jewish-occupied Territory (Israel)	20,922,023	77.40%
Egyptian-occupied Territory (Gaza area)	350,000	1.30%
	27,027,023	100.00%

The armistice lines, particularly between Jordan and Israel, were traced in such a way as to split an Arab village or town in two parts, or to separate villages from lands which belong to its inhabitants with one part remaining under Arab control and the other in Israeli possession. This situation has given rise to serious tension on the Jordan Israeli demarcation line and may lead to open warfare. The Israelis have too often used it as a pretext to carry out armed attacks into Jordanian territory in flagrant breach of the basic provisions of the Armistice Agreement and the resolutions of the Security Council. It may be appropriate, in this connection, to quote from an article by the distinguished General J. B. Glubb Pasha—Chief of the general Staff of the Arab Legion of Jordan, which appeared in the July, 1954, issue of the American Quartley Review "Foreign Affairs."

"When the British Mandate in Palestine came to an end on May 15th, guerilla fighting between Arabs and Jews had already been going on for some months, as the British forces gradually dwindled. On that date the fighting became general.

Both before and after the end of the Mandate, the "Israelis" seized every possible opportunity to get rid of the Arabs still living in the area allotted to them. In some cases massacre was resorted to, as in the Arab village of Deir Yassin, where the women of the village were massacred and their



Jordan household cavarly Regiment on Parade.

bodies thrown down the wells—one morning when most of the men of the village were away at work. One such incident went a long way, and the inhabitants of neighbouring villages fled.

In the course of the fighting, the Jews occupied a number of Arab towns and villages, some of which were in the area allotted to the Arabs under the United Nations partition plan. In many such instances, the civil inhabitants were driven out immediately by Israel troops or were given half an hour to leave. In some cases, all the means of transport were seized by the Israeli army, so that the inhabitants were obliged to abandon all their possessions in their homes.

In general, the Israelis were most ruthless in driving out the Arab civil popultion from places in the coastal plain or near Tel-Aviv, the Israeli capital.

In Northern Galilee, they were far less ruthless, and most of the Arab inhabitants remained. Presumably the hilly district, far removed from vitel strategic centres, was not considered to threaten the safety of Israel.

It was in this manner that the Arab refugee problem came into existence. More than half the total number of refugees sought asylum in Jordan, which according to United Nations statistics now contains 450,000 refugees. The total number of inhabitants of Jordan is about 1,400,000. Thus it wil be seen that the refugees constitute about one-third of the inhabitants of the country.

The genetal fighting in Palestine came to an end in July, 1948. When all parties accepted the United Nations Armistice, the Egyptain Army was still in occupation of the Negeb (the Beersheba area) and of the Wadi Araba, the depression which runs from the Dead Sea down to the Red Sea. This area had been allotted to Israel in the United Nations partition plan, but the Israelis had failed to occupy it. On the other hand, west of Jerusalem and in northern Galilee they had occupied larger and more important areas allotted by the United Nations to the Arabs.

In October, 1948, the Israeli Army broke the United Nations Armistice and attacked the Egyptians. The Israelis, however, claimed that it was the Egyptians who broke it, and 15 days before the battele began, they had refused to allow United Nations observers to visit the area in which their troops were concentrating. The Egyptions were taken completely by surprise. The Israelis occupied the Beersheba area.

Few outsiders realize now that the whole of the southen part of Israel as it stands today was occupied, not in the general fighting from May to July, 1948, but by a deliberate violation of the United Nations Arimstice in October, 1948.

Israel was to be guilty of one more breach of the United Nations Armistice. Jordan had been in military occupation of the Wadi Araba since the end of the British Mandate in May, 1948, and in August, 1948, as already mentioned, the United

Nations had arranged an armistice. In the autumn Jordan and Israel concluded a separate agreement of their own covering the Jerusalem area, and representatives of the rwo countries met in Rhodes on April 3rd, 1949, to conclude a new armistice. While these Jordan/Israel negotiations were going on in Rhodes, suspicious Israeli troop movements were observed southeast of Beersheba. The Jordan Government cabled its delegaion in Rhodes instructing it to ask for an Israel explanation. The Israel delegation vehemently denied any military movement. Three days later, while negotiations were still proceeding in Rhodes, the Israeli Army launched its offensive against the Jordan forces in the Wadi Araba, in defiance of the previous Armistice Agreements to which the Israel Government had subscribed in contradiction of its own assurances given only three days before, and while its own delegation was negotiating with a Jordan Government delegation in Rhodes.

The Israeli conquest of the Negeb produced a new wave of refugees who sought asylum in Jordan. This was not the case, however, in the neighbourhood of Beersheba; although that district was principally inhabited by Arab tribes, these were farmers despite the fact that they lived in tents and although Israel took over control of the Beersheba area, these tribes remained on their lands.

In the subsequent two years the great majority

of these tribes were evicted by the Israeli authorities. Since such an eviction was contrary to the terms of the armistice signed at Rhodes it was carried out by direct military action. The tribes were living and cultivating their own lands, but the Mandatory Government had not yet carried out complete land settlement of the area. Consepuently individuals did not hold title deeds for their land, although the boundaries of tribal areas had been demarcated. This situation gave the Israeli authorities an opportunity. They began on various pretexts to move these tribes from place to place. They refused to admit the right of the tribes to ownerhip of tribal lands, and ordered them to live in other and less fertile areas. In some cases, tribes were allowed to plough and sow their land, and when the crop was above ground, the tribe were moved to another area and the crop was harvested by the Jews.

By such means life was made economically impossible for the Beer-sheba Arab tribes. At this stage, hints were dropped that perphaps the tribesmen would be happier in Jordan. If the suggestion was not welcomed they were moved once more, perphaps to a rocky hillside where life was virtually impossible. Eventually when a tribe allegedly "opted" to migrate into Jordan the Israeli Government was careful to secure a signature from the chief to the effect that they had migrated voluntarily. In this manner the Israeli Government succeeded in getting rid of most of the tribes of the Beersheba plains

and in taking over their lands. There is no doubt that this action was contrary to the spirit of the armistice. It was carried out by making life administratively and economically impossible for the Arabs in question. The process was arrested only in 1952, when yet another tribe arrived at the border to cross into Jordan. The Jordan Government refused to admit it and appeald to the United Nations. The Israeli Government was obliged to allow it to remain.

The Beersheba tribes who migrated into Jordan were peculiarly unfortunate because the United Nations Relief and Works Agency at first refused to recognise them as refugees or to give them relief. As hostilities were not in progress, they were presumably regarded as immigrants into Jordan and not as refugees. Many of these people died of starvation in the ensuing year, before their status was admitted and they were granted relief.

Such, in outline, are the origins of the Arab refugee problem in Jordan. A few of the refugees came voluntarily just before the end of the British Mandate. The vast majority were violently driven out by the Israeli army during the fighting in 1948. The Arab tribes of the Beersheba area were manoeuvred out of their land by making their lives economically impossible.

Varieties of So-called Infiltrators :

Let us now return to the refugees from the

cities and villages of the coastal plain and the foothills of Judaea and Samaria. When the fighting ended with the signature of the Israel / Jordan armistice agreement in April, 1949, most of these refugees were huddled in camps or scattered in caves in the rocky hills of Judaea and Samaria. Many of them could actually see their homes and their farms, their cottages and their gardens. The great majority of them had fled in the clothes in which they stood, abandoning all their possessions in their houses. In a great many cases, families had become divided. Old people unable to escape had stayed behind. A wife had fled with her children when her husband had been away at work, and so on.

An idea also prevailed amongst Arab villagers when the armistice was signed that the troubles were over and they could now go home and resume their normal lives. As a result of this idea, and the other considerations just mentioned, no sooner was the Rhodes armistice signed in April, 1949, than a number of the refugees walked across the armistice line into Israel and made for their homes. All were unarmed, and their intentions were perfectly innocently to collect their possessions, to search for their relatives or just plainly to go home. But the Jews having got rid of them by ruthless methods, were certainly not going to allow them back.

These Arabs returning to look for their homes were at first almost entirely unarmed, but a great

number of them were shot dead, without question or answer, by the first Israeli patrol they met. Others were maltreated or tortured.

In this connection I cannot but regret the ruthless manner in which Israelis dealt with the question of the so-called infiltrators. For more than 10 years now, the Jews of Israel have relied almost solely on violence, apparently disregarding the lesson so often taught in history that violence inevitably breeds counter — violence. As might perhaps have been foreseen, Israeli violence did not put an end to infiltration. Instead, the innocent attempts of the refugees to find their relatives or to collect their property, which could scarcely have been more than a nuisance, assumed the proportions of a problem.

There was another type of so-called infiltrators. By occupying the Beersheba area down to the Gulf of Aqaba, Israel had severed the land passage joining Assia to Africa. The so-called Gaza strip, formerly a part of Palestine, was cutt off from Arab Palestine and Jordan. There was no way of getting from Jordan, Syria or Lebanon to Gaza and Egypt except by air, for such as could afford it. Those who could not pay for an air passage walked across the Israeli — held Beersheba area in the hours of darkness. They did so for many reasons, but they did not do so to injure the Jews—merely because they had business on the other side. Some were engaged in perfectly legitimate trade, and drove back animals loaded with rice, sugar or consumer goods. Some

came from Gaza to Jordan to look for work. None of these persons who crossed the Beersheba area wished to attack the Jews, but Israel patrols frequently intercepted and killed them. And as the number of killed increased, so did the number of embittered persons mount up. Men whose fathers, brothers sons or even wives and daughters had been killed on the Gaza caravans longed for revenge. Some of them went back to kill a Jew to pay off the debt. Thus another comparatively harmless activity — crossing from Jordan to Gaza and back—had been handled with unwarranted ruthlessness.

The armistice line itself produced other varieties of infiltration. In many cases, the line devided a man's home from his orchard. If he went out to pick an apple in his own garden, he was shot dead as an infiltrator. The little town of Qalquiliya lies on the foothills of the mountains of Samaria, on the edge of the coastal plain. Just to the west of the town this plain is thickly covered with luxuriant orange groves, on the produce of which Qalquiliya lived. The armistice line divided the town from its orange groves and thereby cut off its livelihood. At the first orange-picking season, many people of Qalquiliya went over the line, each man to pick his own oranges from his own trees. The Israelis concealed patrols in the orange groves and killed the pickers. The resulting incidents were described by the Israelis as armed incursions of bandits.

There were other sorts of infiltration. A certain

Arab family had remained in Israel and they had a son 15 years old. The boy refused to finish his education in Israel. He infiltrated into Jordan and went to college. At vacation times, he "infiltrated" back to Israel to see his parents. Or take another example. The women of the Moslem Arab tribes of south Palestine were used to being veiled and to wearing long sweeping skirts. They could not at once accustom themselvs to wearing the European clothes and short skirts which were the only ones to be bought in Isreal. Their husbands "infiltrated" to Jordan to buy them their traditional Arab clothes. Such examples could be multiplied almost indefinitely. Most of these cases were the inevitable result of the sudden violent bisection of a country which had been one for eight centuries. Inevitably all sorts of complicated problems and conflicting interests required settlement. Sub-machine guns and hand grenades did not provide an adequate solution.

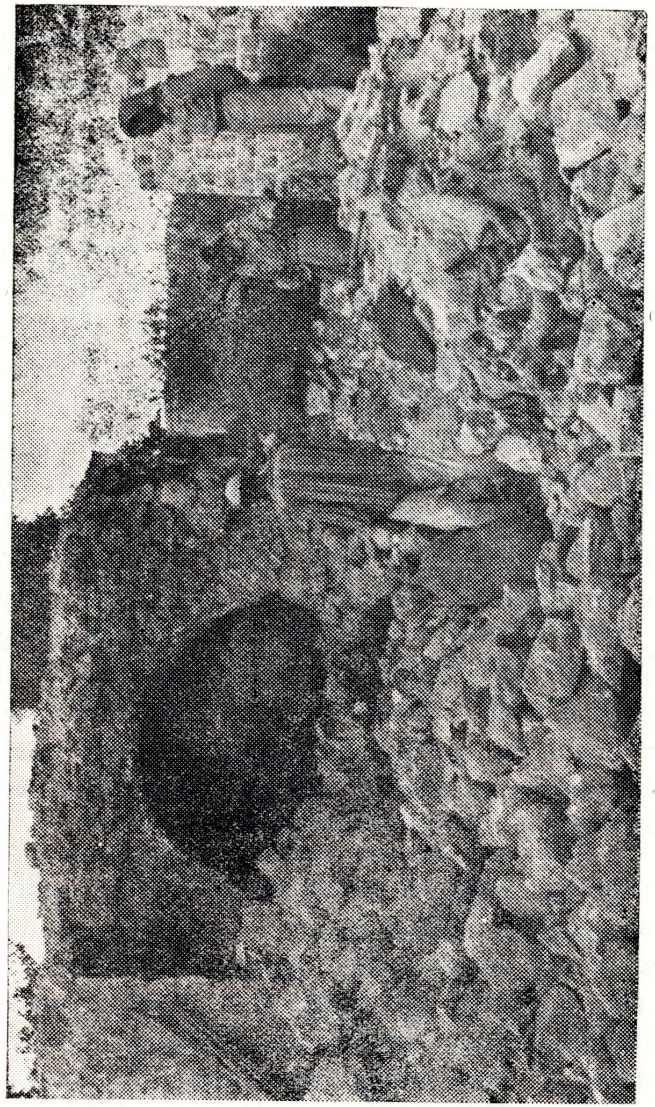
Ruthless Israeli Reprisals

When the Israeli Government discovered that shooting the infiltrators did not put an end to infiltration, they resorted to military reprisals. These at first were on a small scale. A party of eight or ten Israeli soldiers would cross into Jordan and approach a small village; the first one or two persons encountered would be killed, and the patrol would return across the armistic line. Sometimes the patrols came across at night and threw hand

grenades into the windows of houses, often killing women and children in their beds. In these reprisals the Israelis invariably killed the innocent.

The Israeli Government, seeing that its reprisals by military patrols were not effective, did not apparently conclude that its policy was wrong. It decided to use more force. Platoon attacks by the Isaeli Army became the order of the day. Against these military attacks on their villages, the Jordan authorities organized the National Guard to defend the villages. The Israeli platoon attacks were repulsed. The Israelis then stepped up their reprisals by using companies of infantry supported by mortars. The Jordan Government then began to put barbed wire entanglements around frontier villages. The Israel Army replied by using battalions, bombarding the villages with mortars and using detachments of engineers to blow a patch through the barbed wire. Other engineers carried prepared charges, which they laid in the captured village and blew down the houses into heaps of rubble.

In dealing with the question of the so-called infiltrators, the activities of the Israeli army are not limited to the occasional looting of sheep. Infinitely more serious, and in fact the root of the whole problem, are the military attacks on Jordanian villages carried out by units of the Israeli army. The notorious attack on Qibya village in October, 1953, was only a peculiarly bloody example of the kind of



The Israeli aggression on Qibya Village caused 41 dwelling houses and a school to be blown up resulting in the killing of 42 lives and the wounding of 15 persons

"reprisal" attack carried out again and again by the Israeli army for the past five years. In these attacks, men, women and children are slaughtered indiscriminately. Sometimes also the village is deliberatly destroyed with explosives. In doing all this, the Israelis did not realise that massacres of innocent people only make matters worse, and that as an Arab delegate recently said in New York, "Israel cannot shoot her way to peace."

One often reads statements to the effect that both Jordan and Israel are equally guilty of aggression. But it is essential to remember the point that the incidents on the two sides are different in nature. The incidents carried out by Jordanians are the work of destitute refugees, whom the Jordan Government is doing its very utmost to control. The incidents carried out by Israelis, however, are not the work of individuals but are acts of aggression carried out by the armed forces of the Israeli Government.

The Army of Jordan is better known to the world at large as the Arab Legion. In the five years which have elapsed since the Rhodes Armistice was signed in April, 1949, not one single incursion into Israel-held territory has been either planned or executed or even connived at by the Arab Legion, or by any other armed force controlled by the Jordan Government. This is a fact."

Whith the increase of Israel's military power due to the endless hundreds of millions of dollars

which were granted to it by world Zionist organizations and by certain friendly western powers; with the realization that the United Nations, due to Zionist pressure, was powerless or not willing to put an end to Israel's constant acts of aggression against the Arab states, Israel began with what was to become a long series of attacks by organized military forces on peaceful and defenceless Arab villages well inside Jordan in order to force the inhabitants to flee into the interior of Jordan, thus leaving a sort of no-man's land which would fall an easy prey to the Israelis without provoking (at least they hope so) any violent reactions from Britain, France or the United States, signatories of the Tribartite Declaration of May 25th, 1950, guaranteeing the present status quo in the area.

Israel's policy, in short, is aimed at accepting those United Natins decisions that are totally in her interest and disregarding all the rest. There cannot be peace in the area until these lands that are now illegally controlled by Israel are restored to their rightful owners and until the Israelis have withdrawn behind the frontiers traced by the United Nations.

CHAPTER VI

The Arab Refugees

Few people seem to appreciate how the tragedy of the one million homeless Palestinian Arabs came about or who is responsible for it. Many imagine that these refugees became homeless as a result of the fighting in Palestine. Others, especially in the west, under the influence of Zionist propaganda, believe that it was the Arab leaders who caused the tragedy of the refugees by encouraging the Arabs of Palestine to leave their homes and belongings when the fighting started. The answer to these allegations can be found in the events that took place in Palestine even prior to the termination of the Mandate. The brutal massacres, as that of Deir Yassin and the other atrocities committed by the Zionists against the defenceless Arab population of Palestine and long before the Arab States had to interfere in their defence, are the real cause that drove them to leave their homes where they and their forefathers before them lived for thousands of years. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of civilian Arabs were evicted from their homes by the orders of the Jewish military authorities. It happened many times (and for this there is the testimony of General Glubb Pasha, Chief of the general Staff of the Arab Legion of Jordan) that Jewish commanders, on entering Arab districts, ordered the inhabitants to leave those districts within a few hours and prevented them from taking any of their personal belongings. The

Akabat Jabr Refugee Camp

fact that Israel is now refusing to allow the Arab refugees to return to thier homes (in accordance with repeated United Nations decisions) and that they refused Count Bernadotte's request to this effect is a matter of calculated policy on the part of Israel to eliminate from their midst the indigenous Arab population (confiscating their property in the process) in order that the Jewish State shall be exclusively Jewish and that there shall be more room in it for more Jewish immigrants. A true impression of the appalling snfferings experienced by the Palestine Arab refugees in their flight from Zionist terror can only be conveyed through an eye-witness account of that flight. The following is an extract from such an account written to a friend in England by an Englishwoman who toured most of the refugees' districts in August, 1949.

"From Amman, 19th August, 1948.

> To realise what this (the problem of the Arab refugees) means for Transjordan, one must first take a a walk in Amman. You do not have to move more than a few steps before you become aware that the city is horribly overcrowded. The narrow streets are crammed with refugees, some queuing up for bread rations, some crowding round radios to hear the latest news of the fighting in Jerusalem, some moving from shop to shop looking for jobs; others sitting miserably at one of the poorer cafes. Most of them have not a penny in their pockets and depend entirely on the small weekly ration of flour and the few piastres which the local relief committee is allowing each family . . . ."

After the Palestine war about 4 million dunums (880,000 acres) of Arab owned land were taken over

by the Israel Custodian of Absentee Property. Of this area, approximately 300,000 dunums belonging to Arab residents of Israel who had fled from one section of Jewish occupied Palestine to another during the fighting, or had been moved from their villages by the Jewish authorities for so-called security reasons. Land in military areas could be seized in the interest of public safety under the Defence (Emergency) Regulations. The Israel Minister of Agriculture was given wide powers to enable him to take over abandoned Arab fields and to distribute them among cultivators of his choice, in accordance with the Emergency Regulations (Cultivation of Waste Lands) Ordinance. The Israeli Absentee Property law authorised the requisition by the Custodian of all property belonging to Arabs who had left their homes for an area of Palestine not occupied by Jewish forces on November 29th, 1947. It is to be noted that on that date only a small area of the present territory of Israel was in Jewish hands. Thus, for example, any Arab of Nazareth who might have visited the Old City of Jerusalem or Bethlehem at Christmas, 1948, automatically became an absentee under the law. Nearly all the Arab refugees in Israel as well as the 30,000 inhabitants of the little Triangle which became part of Israel under the armistice agreement with Jordan were classified as absentees. Furthermore, many of the Arabs in Israel who, during the battle of Acre, fled from their homes in the new to the old city, lost their propety in accordance with the provisions of this law. Approxi-

mately 200,000 dunums (44,000 acres) of agricultural land belonging to absentee Arab villagers living in the Little Triangle had been given to neighbouring Jewish collective farms. In many areas the pathetic situation arose in which the Custodian rented absentee property to its original legal owners. All the Arabs of Kafr Ilit near Nazareth were declared absentee although half of them had never left, not even during the fighting which occurred in the village. After the war, those of them who remained were forced to pay to the Custodian for the use of their own lands. In an effort to consolidate Government control of property requisitioned from Arabs resident in Israel, the Land Acquisition (Consolidation and Compensation) Law was passed by the Knesset on March 10th, 1953. It provided that all land acquired for what it called purposes of "vital development, settlement or security" between May 18th, 1948, and April 1st, 1952, was to become the property of the Israel Development Authority. The owners were to be compensated in cash, or if they were landless farmers who had earned their living from the soil, they were entitled to a grant or a lease of an alternative piece of land sufficient to maintain themselves. This holding was to be designated by the requisitioning authorities. In case of disagreement, the owner was to be paid a cash payment. This unjust law was opposed by the Arab community who pointed out that it made Arab citizens dependent upon the goodwill of the Development Authority; that cash payments were greatly

undervaluated and that compensation in the form of leaseholds was unfair. Another example that does not guarantee the equality of the Arab minority in Israel is to be found in the Nationality Law of 1952. To obtain Israeli nationality by residence, an Arab must prove that he was a Palestinian citizen, was registered as an inhabitant on March 1st, 1952, and was in Israel from May 14th, 1948, until the law came into force. Many Arabs point out that the documents necessary to prove that they are residents of Israel were lost or destroyed during the days of the war, or were confiscated by the Army at the time their villages were occupied. Acquisition of citizenship by naturalization discriminates against Arabs because it requires those making application to have some knowledge of the Hebrew language. The Arabic language is not recognised as an official language. Even if the requirements of naturalization are fulfilled, nationality is not automatically acquired, for the Minister of the Interior has final discretion "if he thinks fit to do so . . . to grant . . . Israel nationality by the issue of a certificate . . . " Under the terms of the law many critics placed the figure of those denied citizenship under the terms of the law at 50% of the Arab community.

The United Nations by its decision to partition Palestine is largely responsible for the problem of the refugees. Though it is providing some aid to refugees through United Nations Relief & Work Agency, this aid in addition to, its being in no way a solution

Milk Distribution centre at Karameh Refugee Camp, Jordan Valley.

of the refugee problem, is in every way inadequate.

The earliest approach to the Palestine refugee problem by a United Nations authority came from Count Folke Bernadotte, the United Nations Palestine Mediator, who called for the repatriarion of the Palestine Arab refugees and spent much time and effort in attempting to persuade Israel to agree to the most obvious solution of the Palestine refugee question, namely a solution based on repatriation. Count Bernadotte's recommendation calling for the repatriation of refugees was endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 11th, 1948, when a resolution was passed providing inter alia:

> "That the refugees wishing to return to their homes and to live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property." (2)

However, neither the Mediator's efforts nor the U.N. General Assembly Resolution had any effect on the defiant attitude of Israel. Meanwhile, international assistance to the refugees became imperative. This assistance came as a result of Count Bernadotte's appeal. "The choice," he told the world in September, 1948, was "between saving the lives of many thousands of people or permitting them to die." Funds were immediately forthcoming from 24 nations for the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees

(2) Resolution No. 194 (III) U.N. Document A/8110.

which was set up to carry out the relief programme with the aid of three voluntary organisations, namely the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies and the American Friends Service Committee, as well as UNICEF and the World Health Organisation. As time went by, it was felt that the Voluntary Agencies could no longer bear so large a burden, and UNRWA was created by the general resolution of 8th December, 1949, to take over all operations as well as to: "Consult with the Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and works projects are no longer available."

On the 1st May, 1950, UNRWA took over Palestine refugees relief work from three voluntary organisations that had preceded it. Since that date its mandate has been renewed annually by successive U.N. General Assembly sessions. On November 30th, 1954, a four power proposal calling for continued aid to Palestine Arab refugees for another five years was approved by the United Nations Special Political Committee by a vote of 40-0. Eight countries, including Israel, abstained from voting. The proposal sponsored by the United Nations, France, Turkey and Britain, specified that relief should be continued till the 30th June, 1960, without prejudice to the right of refugees to repatriation. The four-power proposal was approved by the General Assembly on December 4th, 1954. Like earlier resolutions adopted by the United

Nations General Assembly on the Palestine refugess, the 1954 resolution admits the lawful right of refugees to repatriation and compensation, and in para. 2 of its operative part specifically requests UNRWA to continue its consultations with U.N. Conciliation Commission for Palestine in the best interests of their respective tasks, with particular reference to paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (111) (referred to above).

It is matter of deep regret that the resolution does not empower UNRWA to grant rations to inhabitants of frontier villages who have been deprived of their means of livelihood while at the same time no aid has been given to them on the pretext that theoretically they are not refugees because they are still living in their own houses.

It is an undisputed fact that the Palestine Arabs prior to their disaster had reached a relatively high standard of progress in their country. The national income of the Arabs of Palestine exceeds 315 million pounds sterling. The proportion of the educated population was 84%. 93% of children of school age (between the ages of 7 and 14) used to go to school. The rate of births was 54 per thousand, while that of deaths was 23 per thousand. Health and sanitation standars were fairly high in Arab Palestine. Today, they live in a most pitiful condition, which makes them liable to embrace subversive ideas after they have given up all hope of receiving justice. All that the refugees are asking for is to be allowed to return to thier homes and belongings in accordance with repeated decisions of the United Nations. Is this too much to ask for?

CONCLUSION

This is the story of Palestine. It is the story of a unique act of aggression committed by the Zionists against the Arabs in an Arab country. This injustice stands now naked for the whole world to see.

The Arabs appreciate that Zionism and Judaism are not the same thing. They are opposed to Zionism because it is based on racial discrimination and fanaticism. They therefore appreciate Jewish opposition to political Zionism in America and elsewhere. The Arabs being Semites themslves cannot be anti—Semites. Even to day, after all the ruthless brutality that the Zionists committed in Palestine, considerable Jewish communities, for example in Lebanon and Egypt, continue to enjoy a life of perfect equality and peace. During the Middle Ages when Jews were being constantly persecuted in the West, Jewish citizens prospered under tolerant Arab-Islamic rule of the Caliphs of Baghdad, Cairo and Cordova.

As a result of the creation of Israel, one million Palestine Arabs have lost their homes and are living a life of misery. The vast majority are now living in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan where they have been granted full rights and privileges in spite of the difficult economic situation of Jordan. His Majesty King Hussein, one of the most able and sincere sovereigns who reigned in that Part of the world, is deeply concerned at the fate of these refugees.

Though the General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly asserted the right of these refugees to repatriation and compensation, yet it has failed to take a firm line which has served to foster the belief that all the United Nations recognises is the *fait accompli*.

The Arabs are firmly convinced that the present tension and instability in the Middle East could only be eliminated if a certain Western Power (on whom Israel is completely dependent for economic help) forced Israel, especially through the withholding from her of indispensable economic assistance, to comply with the wishes of the international community.

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